
Philipp von Rosen Galerie

Ignacio Uriarte

Rechteck, Dreieck, Kreis (Rectangle, Triangle, Circle)

Exhibition from June 8 to August 24, 2024

Opening on June 7, 2024, 6 – 10 pm

With *Rechteck, Dreieck, Kreis (Rectangle, Triangle, Circle)* we are showing our fifth solo exhibition of the German-Spanish artist Ignacio Uriarte (*1972 in Krefeld, lives in Valencia).

Before deciding to pursue his passion and a career as an artist, Uriarte worked as a business administrator for many years. Now he processes his impressions and experiences from the business world and bureaucracy and creates art in which he deconstructs office materials of all kinds. Apart from a two-year course in audiovisual arts at the Centro de Artes Audiovisuales in Guadalajara, Mexico, Uriarte is self-taught in his artistic practices. The current exhibition presents serial doodle drawings in a new, muted color palette, which are divided into three chapters / exhibition spaces according to their basic geometric shapes: rectangles, triangles, circles.

For this exhibition, Uriarte switches to a new range of fineliners with 14 different colors. Previously, fineliners in the standard office colors red, green, blue and black were used, and the inks were mixed to create intermediate shades. With this change, Uriarte seems to be moving away from the office with its rather bright, signaling colors and turning to an aesthetic that he himself directs as an artist. However, the new color palette with tones such as Prussian blue, shades of grey, Bordeaux red, brown and black reflects popular color choices for suits and costumes, again referencing the business world.

It is not only the colors that change in the current “scribble drawings”, but also the type of superimpositions and the creation of graphic spaces that we can experience now are not yet known from Uriarte’s work. Uriarte deals with the question of how – in drawing – space can emerge or dissolve. Which geometric shapes can be used to create space and how stable or dynamic can this space appear to the viewer as a result? It is not only the processed surfaces in the drawings that play a role here, but also how the empty space in and around the forms is activated. However, the drawings also contain references to the working world: the shapes used often become vehicles that serve to represent mathematical formulas and rules, which are frequently used in work processes (in everyday office life) to calculate budgets, working hours, payroll accounting, etc. Similar shapes are also frequently used by companies as symbols, be it as a company logo, on an event poster or in a PowerPoint presentation for the simplified representation of company values or complex systems.

A playful moment consists in the freedom in dealing with geometry and with created spaces through overlapping, multiplication and division. One example of this is the work *Vertigo*. While Alfred Hitchcock’s famous film of the same title is about the fear of falling into the depths, we enjoy being drawn into the central depth space by Uriarte’s drawing. It is created by the combination of right-angled triangles that are staggered, reduced in size and rotated (by 22.5° each time) to the right, so that after two rotations a square standing on its tips is created, after a total of four rotations another orthogonally aligned and after six rotations yet another square standing on its tip. In the center shimmers an unscribbled field that seems to draw us suggestively into the sheet.

Less playful, on the other hand, is the drawing *Black Window Division*, a work from the exhibition room that can be titled ‘Rectangle’. Here, the sheet format is divided into a total of 14 fields in such a way that the two upper fields arranged next to each other are in DIN A4 format, the four fields below are in DIN A6 format and the eight fields below that are in DIN A8 format. Uriarte has thus incorporated a development of the fields, each scribbled on in its upper left-hand corner, which has to do with the office world, that is systematic, but which at the same time – also through the suggested spatiality – evokes memories of the department store facades of the architect Egon Eiermann.

A playful moment can also be described in the drawing *Blue Square Ribbon Overlap*: the central, white, unscrib-

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bled square, which has an edge length of one third of the edge length of the entire worked square, is surrounded by a tubular-looking ribbon in black-blue, turning into a flattened-looking square with a central white at one corner through the suggested overlap of two imaginary ends. This is no longer an office system, but is more reminiscent of company logos (one thinks of the “green band of sympathy” of the former Dresdner Bank or the logo of Deutsche Bank and other trademarks).

Another special feature of Uriarte’s new drawings are the light effects he has created. They are created by the gradations and the multiplication / staggering of the scribbles, which repeatedly create spaces that allow the light to shimmer through, seemingly like backlighting. We see this clearly, for example, in the diptych *Doors*, which makes metaphors such as “light at the end of the tunnel” or “the light leads us onto the right path” plausible.

These quasi-religious, spiritual associations can also be found in the *Black Arches* and *Red Arches* from the ‘Circle’ room. They are reminiscent of the thick columns of Romanesque crypts, medieval column capitals or the abstract patterns found as wall decorations in Arab mosques – or, for those who prefer nature to sacred spaces, plants in a jungle. Architectural vaults are also suggested by the *Grey Semicircle Diptych*, where the semicircles are scribbled alternately in two barely distinguishable shades of gray, so that arches can be seen that seem to protrude forward. The religious interpretation can be taken even further, without this necessarily having been Uriarte’s intention. For the *Semicircle Propellers*, a four-part work in grey and Prussian blue, which develop dynamically in terms of their number, always show stars in the center with different numbers of rays of different lengths and sizes. On the other hand, the semicircles are also reminiscent of the hour positions on clocks, water mills or bucket wheel excavators, thus basically establishing that the drawings offer new forms to be read and interpreted. This also applies to *Warm and Cold Waves*, a drawing with a highly subtle color difference and a technoid basic tone, but also with organic forms reminiscent of interlocking hands or the teeth of a zipper. Negative space also plays a major role here. And the history of psychedelic design, when you think of wallpaper, curtains or upholstery fabrics from the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In the ‘Triangle’ room, we see another work, *Black Rhombusses*, which – through the layering or alternation of scribbled and unscribbled zones – has a strong light effect and suggests that we are surrounded here or experience a form of enlightenment. The shape can be traced back to the “Ojo de Dios” (“Eye of God”), a spiritual votive object originating with the Huichol Indians in Mexico. This form appears in the Latin American concrete art of the 1960s, which Uriarte studied intensively.

Many of the drawings in Uriarte’s exhibition offer the viewer a special visual experience: the optical illusion of movement. By using repetitive forms, Uriarte creates the illusion of rotating, decreasing or increasing and flickering shapes. In addition, it is the extreme precision and seemingly mechanical handwork of the doodle drawings that fascinates time and again.

If you have any further questions or would like to receive images, please contact the gallery.